
Complete Communities

Alief/Westwood Comments

November 19, 2019



Table 1

- “Where are the places that you love? What are the strengths of Alief/Westwood that we should build on? What do you love most about the community?”
 - Diversity
 - Different, many activities outside normal hours
 - Movie night hosted by Hope Clinic
 - Initiatives: Community Center health homes- walkability assessments
 - Medical Sign ups at health clinic, Medicaid, insurance plans
 - Youth group- help young people with their health
 - They change the clinic's environment so that young adults feel comfortable
 - General medicine, OBGYN, mental health
 - Behavioral department - The clinic has psychologists and therapists who help patients with their mental health, which is very important to the community. More important for Asian society because for them it is a stigma and they are ashamed to talk about their mental health.
 - Aldine ISD has good education
- “Where are the areas that need more love? What are some challenges Alief faces? What would you like to change?”
 - Barriers between cultures
 - Difficulty getting services because of language barriers
 - Sidewalks cracked, lack of sidewalks in certain areas
 - If there are parks, but they are not maintained
 - Boone Road Park Is Dangerous Needs Support
 - People cross the street without seeing the traffic light, many accidents and deaths
 - Lack of public transportation and crosswalks
 - Public transport doesn't lead directly to nowhere heavily cut off and disconnected
 - Traffic lights are useless and there are also not enough and the time to cross is very short
 - Bellaire Blvd, difficult to cross, very dangerous especially for mothers with strollers and seniors
 - Bissonnet is a prostitution area
 - Many old apartments
 - Burnt building that hasn't been cleaned yet
 - Drinking water in contaminated Alief - contains Chromium 6 and has caused many health problems to newborn babies - the government does nothing
 - Difficult to access healthy food because of poverty
 - Not enough food pantry
 - Lots of fast food- this Chinatown has family restaurants, but across the Beltway is all fast food
 - Homeless people and drugs at the park Boone park

- “In 10 years when Alief/Westwood is a Complete Community, how would you describe it...what would the community have?”
 - More trees, trees give life and create a healthy community
 - Green spaces with nature
 - Complete streets with trees, sidewalks, etc.,
 - More parks- green areas determine our health- zip code can say a lot about how healthy a community is
 - Sugarhill is dangerous Landfill
 - Safety at Alief
 - Seek help and jobs for homeless people
- 3 Key points
 - Lack of sidewalks and care of them
 - Trees and green spaces for a healthy community
 - Best public transportation

Table 2

- “Where are the places that you love? What are the strengths of Alief/Westwood that we should build on? What do you love most about the community?”
 - Parks
 - Fiorenza Park
 - Alief community park
 - Arthur Storey park
 - Smith elementary
 - Amity park
 - Hong Kong market
 - Alief YMCA
 - Hastings H.S
 - Killough Middle School
 - Stone ridge apartments
- “Where are the areas that need more love? What are some challenges Alief/Westwood faces? What would you like to change?”
 - The temporary closing of Alief community park
 - Only one community center in this boundary
 - Hackberry park is more outdoor with old equipment, inadequate equipment (very small)
 - No baseball court, no soccer, no athletic purposes
 - High crime in spice lane, surrounding apartments
 - Bissonnet corridor is high crime (prostitution, drugs, gangs)
 - Beltway to 59
 - Boone, Bissonnet, Kirkwood, Dairy Ashford - bad roads with potholes
 - Street racing on Kinney (no speed bumps)
 - Single family homes have foundation issues

- Police storefront being closed for foot patrols instead
- Need more activities like festivals like other neighborhoods
- Need a better reputation, Alief has always been known as the ghetto “Swat”, need to reduce the stigma
- Renovate the bowling alley
- Entertainment venues adult & kids
- 3 Key points
 - Community Center
 - Public Safety (Police mobile storefront)
 - Street Repair

Table 3

- “Where are the places that you love? What are the strengths of Alief/Westwood that we should build on? What do you love most about the community?”
 - Diversity of Alief
 - Bellaire St. various food places along the corridor and Business community
 - Commercial districts
 - Asian temples
 - Parks and Alief community parks
 - Community center off Bellaire and Kirkwood
- “Where are the areas that need more love? What are some challenges Alief/Westwood faces? What would you like to change?”
 - Beechnut and Bissonnet St need more attention like Bellaire St - they need more commercial, more eating places, sidewalks, etc.
 - The old golf course between Kirkwood and Cook Rd need to be utilized- do something with it
 - Too much crime in the area, in the night and day. It is not safe in general
 - Need more lighting off of Bellaire
 - Bellaire is fine but everywhere else near Bellaire is too dark
 - Finish and extend Arthur Storey Park
 - Better partnership with the school district and the city of Houston
 - More libraries - need more of them
 - Only library being moved to the Alief community center and it will be smaller
 - More libraries - near schools preferably
 - Need more fire stations
- “In 10 years when Alief/Westwood is a Complete Community, how would you describe it...what would the community have?”
 - Have more transit
 - Less congestion
 - More connectivity
 - Schools should be a part of the community
 - School district and community should be one
 - Better safer streets

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- More pedestrian safe crossings
 - More pedestrian shelters and refuges
 - More medians and safer turns
 - More libraries
 - More parks and community parks with pools
 - More programs offered in the community centers
 - 3 Key points
 - More libraries/community gathering areas. More community programs
 - Transportation, congestion, more transit, safer crossings, lighting, safer turns
 - Need more affordable housing and more planned communities; businesses need to be responsible for communities since there is no zoning

Table 4

- “Where are the places that you love? What are the strengths of Alief/Westwood that we should build on? What do you love most about the community?”
 - Harwin Park
 - Bowling Alley
 - Local and senior leagues
 - The landing
 - Helps victims of sex exploitation/trafficking
 - Hong Kong market
 - Canton crawfish
 - Asian grocery store Viet Hoa
 - West Houston medical center
 - Texas children women’s clinic on Bissonnet
 - IORA
 - Senior focused primary care clinic with transportation
 - Tejas tacos
 - Wonderful school district
 - Community spirit and inclusivity with immigrants
 - Very little prejudice
 - Very generous
 - Halliburton campus is iconic here
 - Hope clinic
 - Community center only real place for children to go
 - Holiday events
 - Community center only place for kids with programs for children. Neighborhood wide program
- “Where are the areas that need more love? What are some challenges Alief/Westwood faces? What would you like to change?”
 - Technology opportunities

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- Old Halliburton building could have new use as an innovation hub for entrepreneurs.
 - Once people have established themselves, they then move out of the area because there are not many resources
 - Asian community barrier, inclusiveness
 - Diversity ideals
 - Infant mortality rate highest in city
 - Younger pregnancy
 - More stressed
 - Sex trafficking and prostitution
 - Internationally known corridor
 - Drug exchange also highest in these areas
 - Homelessness
 - Slum lords on Bissonnet
 - Texas department of prisons put more criminals in area for housing
 - After hours gambling and prostitution
 - Gang activity
 - Sex trafficking
 - Rim and tires
 - Harwin
 - Lack of destination
 - A lot of women are under great amounts of stress because they are being trafficked, this at times causes unwanted pregnancies and it leads to increase of child mortality because they are young women under stress becoming pregnant
 - Strip malls are isolated
 - Not enough eyes on street
 - No after hour destinations or social events

Team 5

- “Where are the places that you love? What are the strengths of Alief/Westwood that we should build on? What do you love most about the community?”
 - N/A
- “Where are the areas that need more love? What are some challenges Alief/Westwood faces? What would you like to change?”
 - Red light district
 - Prostitution
 - Run down apartments, townhomes and condominiums
 - Gangs and violent actions
 - Safety, concerns for families in apartment complexes
 - Immigrant families
 - Poor management and training
 - Education programs

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- Helping low income families including those in poverty
 - Swimming pool at forum park
 - Bringing attractions for teenagers
 - Administration building near park is up for sale
 - Multi service center
 - Computer labs
 - Churches
 - Provide training courses for housing- church located at sugar branch drive (within red light district)
 - 200 parking spaces, plenty of empty rooms redeemed Christian Church of God
 - Higher dimension church
 - Predominantly Latino attendees, African American leaders
 - Job training
 - Knowing tenant rights
 - Existing workforce center off Bissonnet
 - Expand resources to surrounding areas, including red light district
 - Bring resources to RLD
 - IMD international management districts
 - Complaints from people about IMD not getting work done
 - Not enough community outreach
 - Utilizing the soon to be multi-service center near Alief community park as a gathering place
 - Satellite community/multi-service center to reach out to various populations
 - Where are all the sol (c3s) in the area
 - Esplanade at forum park
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 - “In 10 years when Alief/Westwood is a Complete Community, how would you describe it...what would the community have?”
 - N/A
 - 3 Key points
 - Improve red light district
 - New multi-service center
 - Swimming pool at forum park
 - Job training resources OJT
 - Rebuilding lives
 - Map Comments
 - New multi-service center near Alief community park
 - Work force center near Dairy Ashford and Bissonnet
 - Slum near forum park
 - China town is luxurious

Table 6

- “Where are the places that you love? What are the strengths of Alief/Westwood that we should build on? What do you love most about the community?”
 - Leewood West Subdivision: diversity and great neighbors
 - Hackberry Community Center: needs to be developed (this is in the works)
 - Alief Amity Park: good amenity for youth/students/adults
- “Where are the areas that need more love? What are some challenges Alief/Westwood faces? What would you like to change?”
 - Northwest part of the neighborhood has bumpy roads.
 - Northwest part of the neighborhood has a lot of problems in general.
 - Beechnut: crime, police will give you tickets but they don’t care to respond to resident calls.
 - Lots of crime on Cook by the landfill.
 - Bus stops are unkempt (Synott at the northern edge of the neighborhood).
 - The city started a sidewalk and never finished it on Synott at the northern edge of the neighborhood boundary; it’s inaccessible and needs to be finished.
 - There is a gas station on every corner, it ends up filling the need for a full service grocery and people pay convenience store prices for less healthy food.
 - Police response-- don’t want to call 911 when we hear gunshots, but when we call the non-emergency number we get forwarded to another station and then another and never get a response. People are confused about who to call.
 - One of the HPD police stations non-emergency number is wrong on google, it’s disconnected.
 - Synott Rd before Westheimer (northern portion of neighborhood) has no lights whatsoever with housing on both sides.
 - Noise from Westpark Tollway
 - Bad streets and drainage around Boone and Bandlon
 - Street lights at Boone and Bellaire are out
 - Homeless people mess up the fence between Westpark Tollway and subdivisions in Alief and then the HOA has to fix it.
 - Vacant lot next to Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza Park-- who owns it? Nobody but the residents seem concerned about maintaining it.
 - Crime in northwest portion of neighborhood.
- “In 10 years when Alief/Westwood is a Complete Community, how would you describe it...what would the community have?”
 - Less dogs and cats on the street-- need a BARC center within the neighborhood.
 - Less prostitution and soliciting on Bissonnet.
 - Community events that bring people together across cultures.
 - Safety (less wanderers).
 - Enrichment activities for the kids.
 - Less speed-- we have 7 schools and people drive way too fast by them

- Better traffic patterns-- traffic doesn't flow on Bellaire, Dairy Ashford, and Beechnut like it does on Westheimer. The lights are not timed right.
- More civic engagement. Barriers right now include language, timing of events, location, and transportation-- need to find locations inside of the neighborhood that are accessible.
- More jobs.
- More transportation options (protected bike lanes and better bus routes to places like the med center, right now it takes 90 minutes to get there by bus)
- We have apartments everywhere-- we want more housing with character.
- Need a hospital inside the neighborhood and emergency clinics.
- Need a Trader Joe's or Sprouts (small, nice, American style grocery store) instead of just gas stations and convenience stores.
- 3 Key points
 - Safety--street lights, police response, crime
 - Traffic and roads--poor condition, bad traffic flow through the neighborhood
 - Walkability and accessibility--sidewalk network not complete, difficult to reach key destinations without a car

Table 7

- "Where are the places that you love? What are the strengths of Alief/Westwood that we should build on? What do you love most about the community?"
 - Diversity in ethnicity/religion/culture (X5)
 - Pride in Alief is very strong/conspicuous/visible
 - Alief ISD is a strong foundation.
 - Camaraderie between groups is palpable
 - Respect/tolerance/acceptance between different groups, religions, etc.-- develop unique relationships.
 - Food and culture is very eclectic (X2)
 - Over 100 community partners to deliver aid/food like churches, schools, community centers.
 - The strong school system is good for children, good for them to experience diversity of culture.
 - Alief is evolving quickly
 - Community garden is a good gathering place, and a way for different groups to bond/connect over food/vegetables
 - Youngblood School
 - Bike trails (future: Arthur Storey, Boone Road, Hackberry, and Brays Bayou)
 - "Where are the areas that need more love? What are some challenges Alief/Westwood faces? What would you like to change?" Unification of ethnic/linguistic groups is difficult
 - Civic apathy due to the lack of government leadership and representation from the Alief community.
 - Many residents work 2+ jobs and have odd hours; it's hard to be civically engaged.

- Street crime at Bissonnet and BW8, human trafficking.
- 3 places to go to engage the community
 - Churches, temples, religious institutions.
 - Local civic groups e.g. BPSOS
 - Lee's Sandwich Shop
- Need communication channel for neighborhood (like a newsletter)
- Houston Chronicle used to have neighborhood specific section-- that was good.
- Need to find champions for various groups.
- IMD has newsletter with professional writer, promotes local business, invests in social media (vulnerable to vulgarity) website.
- Internet is slow in Alief!
- Gap between older and younger residents, few institutions/attractions/housing for young adults.
- Few clubs, theatres, or entertainment.
- Need more events and gathering places.
- Very little programming (IMD has a few festivals).
- Church runs rocket fest for children.
- The community is trying to attract a dog park.
- Multiple, smaller event spaces are better than one central hub.
- The out of use golf course and landfill need to be addressed.
- Transportation is a major issue. New development south of Bissonnet is not accessible, it's difficult to access.
- Difficult to access parks.
- Need a circulator route between major destinations in the neighborhood (X2).
- Need to make more walkable areas, more mixed youth development, and diversified retail.
- Westheimer is big external destination (shopping, HEB, Target, Trader Joe's, Walmart).
- People don't do their daily shopping in the neighborhood, they travel outward for it.
- 3 Key points
 - Connectivity/transportation
 - Sugar Hill site needs to be developed
 - Nothing to do, need retail diversity and activities for different generations

Map Notes

- Subdivision to the East of Harmony School of Exploration, Innovation, and Science Houston: Need more lights, sidewalks are nonexistent, more HPD presence in the neighborhood (visibility)
- Along SB US 59 TO BW 8 South of Sunnyside: Generational poverty- look for job opportunities, employment, and education
- The landing is a loved place in the neighborhood
- Iora Clinic 6613 S. Braeswood is a place that is loved
- Housing programs for example convicts rehouse program, support housing, rapid housing
- There is no neighborhood grocery store - have Hispanic grocery store, Asian centers, corner stores, small Walmart

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- Hackberry Park is very local
 - Love Texas Children's
 - Business on Chambers of Commerce (Wilcrest and Panther)
 - Financial Partners (Bissonnet and Course)
 - Business Partnerships to develop activity places (Plumbrook and Leawood)
 - Authentic Vietnamese Food (Bellaire and Boone)
 - Smallest, accessible park for people with disabilities (Westpark tollway and Boone Street)
 - Latino/African restaurants on Cook and Bissonnet
 - Community Garden between Cook and Kirkwood on drainage easement
 - Multi-service center coming soon to Alief Community Park

A COMPLETE COMMUNITY IS...

Amazing
Connected
Diverse
Diverse
Engaging
Loving
Quiet
Special
Vision

Community
Convenience
Diverse
Diverse
Great
Integrative
Safe
Unique
Whole

Complete
Cultural
Diverse
Diverse
Helpful
Quality
Safe
Vibrant